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*Branston and Wright, London*

**KILCLIEF CASTLE,**  
COUNTY OF DOWN.

Among the numerous architectural remains of antiquity which adorn the shores of the fertile County of Down, some of which we have already noticed, the Castle of Kilclief claims attention, as well on account of its early antiquity, as of its fine preservation, and of some curious circumstances connected with its history which have been collected by Harris, the industrious historian of the county.

This fine example of the Anglo-Irish military keep, is situated at the entrance of Strangford harbour, and is still entire, with the exception of the roof. It is of considerable size and height, and in its general form nearly a square, with the addition of two quadrangular wings in front, in one of which is a stair-case, and in the other a stack of closets. The first floor is vaulted, and the second has a stone chimney-piece on which is carved the figure of a bird, resembling a hawk, and also a shield bearing a cross Patee.

The name of the founder, and period of the erection of this Castle, are unknown; but its style of architecture sufficiently proves it to be of the early part of the fourteenth century. It, with the lands adjoining, which constituted a fine demesne of some of the finest quality in the barony, were

an ancient See house and Manor of the Bishops of Down; and it is not unlikely that it was erected for their use, as we find from history, that it was inhabited by one of them early in the fifteenth century. A strong castle was not an inappropriate or unnecessary description of episcopal residence in those days, when Bishops were not unfrequently, like Friar Tuck, in *Ivanhoe*, as much distinguished for their pugnacity as piety. Thus we are informed that John Ross, Prior of the Benedictines in Down, who obtained the Bishoprick in 1387, was in his character "marked with almost every vice; and in this year (1380) he obtained the King's pardon, on the payment of the fine of six marks, for all treasons, transgressions, felonies, extortions, usurpations, and excesses, whatsoever, whereof he had been indicted." (Archdall from King's Collections.) This worthy, however, was either more moral or more fortunate than his successor, John Cely, or Sely, who was likewise promoted to the Bishoprick, from the Priorship of Down, and after much difficulty, ultimately deprived of his See, as it is stated in a letter from the Primate Prene to Pope Eugene IV. *de criminibus et exeessibus*, for crimes and excesses. Of those excesses, one of the most noted, and which was the probable cause of his disgrace, was his having publicly cohabited with a married woman, named Lettice Thombe, in his Castle of Kilclief. For this scandal

he was served, in 1434, by the Archbishop Swain with a monitory process in this Castle, requiring him to turn off his mistress, and that if he did not do so in the time prefixed, he should not only be suspended from Divine service, but solemnly excommunicated."—The Bishop, however, was not to be so easily terrified, and found means to weather the storm for several years, till in 1441, he was prosecuted with effect, and ultimately deprived. He was the last Bishop of Down, previous to its union with the See of Connor. Cely seems to have been a bad or at least an irregular man very early, for on the 10th of July, 1414, by the name of John Sely, Bishop of Down, late Prior of the Cathedral of St. Patricks of Down, a pardon passed the great seal, acquitting him of all treasons, transgressions, and other crimes, of which he had been indicted and outlawed. (Rot. pat. tur. Berni. 2d Hen. 5 f. no. 20.)

Perhaps it is only doing justice to the fame of "Ould Ireland," to note that these worthy successors of St. Cailin, were not Irish, or at least "mere Irish," for it appears from an Act of Parliament of the year 1380, that no person of that description should be permitted to profess himself in the Abbey of Down.

There is a chamber in the Castle of Kilclief, called the Hawk's Chamber, which Harrisstates, was by the tradition of the old natives, the place where Bishop Cely's Falconer and Hawks were kept; this tradition, however, might, as he adds, have arisen from the representation of the bird already noticed, as being sculptured on the chimney-piece in the Castle.

Kilclief is a Rectory of the Archdeaconry of Down, and owes its origin to the times of St. Patrick, who placed over a church here, which is now the parish church, two of his disciples who were brothers, named Eugenius and Neill. In a subsequent age, an hospital for Lepers was founded here, under the patronage of Saint Peter. P.

#### TOO FOND OF A GLASS.

Mary Dempsey, my ploughman's wife, came to me in great distress the other day; and after twisting in her fingers the corner of her apron, with which she had been wiping her eyes, and exhibiting sundry other manifestations of an irritated or excited mind, told me (bursting into a loud lamentation,) that her son Mick had enlisted.

Sobs for some time prevented her telling me the particular causes which had induced this young man, who had been serving as under steward in the employment of a very respectable gentleman in my neighbourhood, to leave his place.

Mick had been a gay, thoughtless fellow—well principled, and beloved by all the workmen in Mr. C——'s employment, but unhappily *too fond of a glass*.

In consequence of repeated irregularities, attendance at wakes and dances, and every idle pastime the country afforded, he was at length dismissed from his service; and then, unfortunately for himself, became process-server and bailiff in a neighbouring district.

In this situation, in which temptations to dram drinking continually occurred, Mick's besetting sin took fast hold of him—in the morning he took his glass to keep the cold out of his stomach; another after breakfast to assist digestion; two or three glasses in the course of the day, to oblige his various employers, who presented the glass and the process together; and two or three tumblers of strong punch just before bed time, as a necessary refreshment after the fatigues of the day. And this vile system soon became a confirmed habit with this young man, who could not pass half a day without his dose of poison, the effects of which were already visible in the sallowness of his eyes and in the inanimate expression of his features.

But let us have poor Mary's story in her own words:—"Och, Mr. Doyle dear, (wringing her hands and still twisting the apron) och, Mrs. Doyle jewel, (my wife and I were playing the parts of Darby and Joan together,) Mick is listed!!—Och, is it for that, his four bones came into the world?—is it for that I'm rearing and looking at him since the day he was first born?—och, murder, murder, to go with the sodgiers!!!"—here again grief rendered her inarticulate.

"I am glad Mary," said I, "it is not worse; if Mick wishes to go into the army, there is nothing discreditable in doing so—quite the reverse—a well conducted soldier is always

respectable, and often gets promotion; but how do you know it to be true?"

Mary then told Mrs. Doyle and me, that Mick having come to town on the preceding day on some process-serving business, got *hearty*, and seeing a recruiting party of the —Regt. was suddenly seized with a fit of military mania, and enlisted. 'His mother,' as she expressed herself, 'saw him yoked with a sodgier, a tinkereen of a fellow, that wasn't within a head and shoulders of Mick. 'Mother,' says he, 'walk up the street 'till I discourse you.'—So I followed him to the next public-house, (my curse on every one of them), and went in with 'im. 'Mother,' says he, 'be after rising your heart with this glass,' and he looked sorrowful like; 'tell Mr. Doyle,' says he, 'I'm listed—do as I bid you.' So I opened my two eyes to see if he was joking, but what did I see but the cockade in his hat. I knew 'twas all over wid him in earnest; so with that I faced the tinkereen of a corp'lar, and says I, what brings the likes of you wid decent boys, to be after crimping 'em from their people, and transporting 'em to the wars? when, well became him, he stood up like any lord, and says he, 'My good woman,' says he, 'the young man is in the king's service, and in my care, so you had better go about your business;—myself filled up, and Mick seeing me about to rise a contention with the corp'lar, 'Mother, says he, 'tis better for you to howld your tongue, and to do as I bid you.'—Och, it was then I knew that he was in *houl*; but Mr. Doyle dear, (and Mary looked most imploringly at Mrs. Doyle and me), won't you speak to the Major—that's the real moral of a fine man, and weighs twenty stone, the Lord increase him; or to the adjutant, that's a mighty pretty, pleasant young gentleman, and looks good natured like; or the captain."

We desired Mary Dempsey, not to take this affair so much to heart, as in all probability it would end better than she expected; and I held forth to her in the following strain: "Mary, your son must remain, if possible, where he is, (my only fear is, that Doctor L——, the regimental surgeon, will judge from his drunken and debilitated look, that he is unfit for the service,) and I'll tell you why:—

"First, you know that he is becoming a confirmed drunkard, and that if he remains under his present temptations, he has no reasonable chance of changing his dreadful and degrading course, (here Mary looked piteously, and admitted that the whiskey was her son's *ruination*), and in the second place, he is setting a bad example in the country; it is better, for all our sakes, that he should be admitted into the army, where he will be carefully watched, and assuredly punished if he offends.

"The dread of disgrace and punishment may arouse him to a sense of his condition, restrain him from excess, and gradually transform him from a stupid, slovenly and worthless drunkard into a smart, clean, and reputable soldier; therefore, do not grieve Mary, at what may save your son from ruin, and you from unhappiness; he may yet see his error in a proper view, and be reclaimed from it."

Mary became a little more composed, particularly when I promised to prevail on some person of more influence than a man in my rank of life could possess, to request the favorable attention of the commanding officer to Mick, in the event of his becoming a sober man,—a very problematical matter however.

She declared that if he ever *grew* to be a serjeant, she should be the proudest of mothers; fully understanding, however, that all depended on himself, on his *total abstinence* from the detestable poison which had hitherto been his curse—on there being every probability, that if he even put his lips to it, his resolution would fail, when punishment, not promotion, would be the result.

She added, as a *clincher*, that she would *compel* him to take his *voluntary* affidavit against *sperits* for a year and a day.

MARTIN DOYLE.

P. S.—The reader will be good enough to consider this short tale as a mere peg, from which, is to be appended something *lengthier*, and more impressive, on the consequences of being *too fond of a glass*.